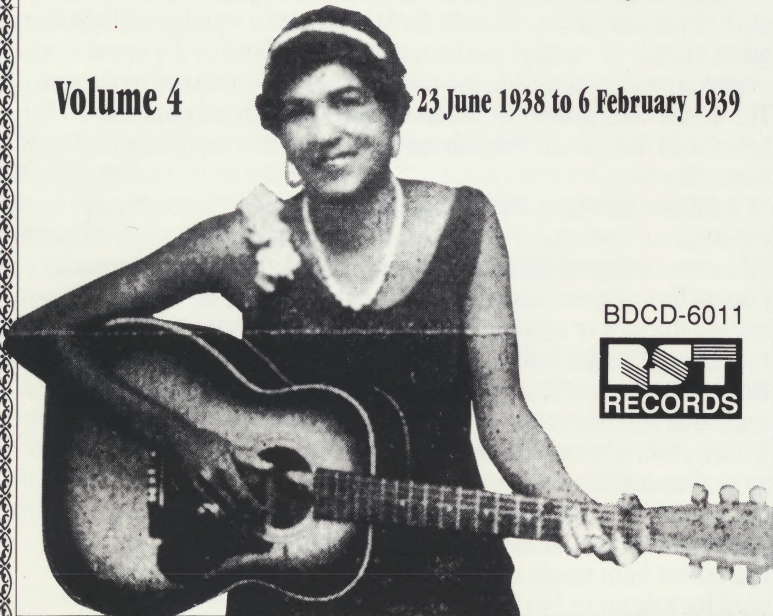


# MEMPHIS MINNIE

Complete Recorded Works 1935-1941 In Chronological Order

**Volume 4**

23 June 1938 to 6 February 1939



BDCD-6011



BDCD-6011



BLUES DOCUMENTS

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# MEMPHIS MINNIE

Complete Recorded Works 1935–1941 In Chronological Order

**VOLUME 4 (23 June 1938 to 6 February 1939)**

1. I Hate To See The Sun Go Down
2. As Long As I Can See You Smile
3. Has Anyone Seen My Man?
4. Good Biscuits
5. I've Been Treated Wrong
6. Keep On Walking
7. Keep On Eating
8. I'd Rather See Him Dead
9. Diggin' My Potatoes (Little Son Joe, vcl.)
10. A.B.C. Blues (Little Son Joe, vcl.)
11. Bone Yard Blues (Little Son Joe, vcl.)
12. My Black Buffalo (Little Son Joe, vcl.)
13. Tuff Luck Blues (Little Son Joe, vcl.)
14. Key To The World (Little Son Joe, vcl.)
15. Black Widow Stinger
16. Good Soppin' (take 3)
17. Poor And Wandering Woman Blues
18. Bad Outside Friends
19. Worried Baby Blues
20. Call The Fire Wagon
21. Low Down Man Blues
22. Don't Lead My Baby Wrong
23. Keep Your Big Mouth Closed

Memphis Minnie had only one recording date in 1938. Its unusual atmosphere is attributable in the main to Charlie McCoy's mandolin, which introduces a whiff of string bands and minstrelsy, especially noticeable on "**Long As I Can See You Smile**". Genuine double meanings are rare, but the advice in "**Good Biscuits**", "Don't let no outside woman bake no biscuits for your man," is equally valid whether taken literally or metaphorically, not that I imagine that the literal meaning was uppermost in the minds of either performers or listeners. The theme is continued in "**Keep On Eating**". Minnie obviously believed in the old saw that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach.

"**I'd Rather See Him Dead**" is in a different idiom, a sombre exposition of confused feelings about a man. "If he don't sleep with me, I'd rather see him dead," she says, but, "If I could only get him back, I would be that poor man's slave."

Around the turn of 1938/1939, Minnie returned to Memphis, where she met Ernest Lawlars, known professionally as 'Little Son Joe'. Born in Hughes, St. Francis County, Arkansas, on 18 June 1900, Lawlars had worked in Memphis clubs in the early thirties, often with Robert Wilkins, with whom he recorded in 1935. (The only title from this session under his own name was unissued.) He continued to work in the Memphis area until he went to Chicago with Minnie in early 1939. Their musical association endured until ill-health forced their retirement from music in the 1950s and their personal relationship until Joe's death in 1961.

With Son Joe on hand, Minnie's recordings again used guitar-duet accompaniments. All her remaining pre-war records, and indeed most of her post-war records too, make use of this format and the addition from time to time of bass or drums makes very little difference to the results. It seems safe to conclude that Minnie felt that this was the presentation that best suited her style. In general, critics have agreed with her.

It is perhaps fanciful to detect an actual sense of having returned to her roots, but that feeling is certainly engendered by "**Keep Your Big Mouth Closed**", performed to the tune of "Sittin' On Top Of The World", with its stolid folk wisdom: "You got to use good judgment and keep your big mouth closed." The words of "**Don't Lead My Baby Wrong**":

"I have wondered all day and dreamed funny things at night,  
Trying to find someone to love me and someone to treat me right,"  
equally reflect universal human experiences.

More aggressive is "**Low Down Man Blues**", concerning a "nasty man". Minnie's reaction is blunt. "Now, I might get me a young boy and raise him to my hand," she says.

After the February 1939 sessions, sixteen months elapsed before Minnie's next recordings. During 1939 she reportedly worked with Fiddlin' Joe Martin in jukes around Jackson, Mississippi.

**Howard Rye**



1. I Hate To See The Sun Go Down	C-2280-1-Vo 04356	(A)	2:42
2. As Long As I Can See You Smile	C-2281-1-Vo 04506	(A)	2:49
3. Has Anyone Seen My Man?	C-2282-1-Vo 04250	(A)	2:43
4. Good Biscuits	C-2283-1-Vo 04295	(A)	2:40
5. I've Been Treated Wrong	C-2284-1-Vo 04250	(A)	2:52
6. Keep On Walking	C-2285-1-Vo 04356	(A)	2:42
7. Keep On Eating	C-2286-1-Vo 04295	(A)	2:37
8. I'd Rather See Him Dead	C-2287-1-Vo 04506	(A)	2:48
9. Diggin' My Potatoes	C-2246-1-Vo 04707	(B)	2:40
10. A.B.C. Blues	C-2247-1-Vo 04776	(B)	2:43
11. Bone Yard Blues	C-2448-1-Vo 04776	(B)	2:12
12. My Black Buffalo	C-2449-1-Vo 04978	(B)	2:55
13. Tuff Luck Blues	C-2450-1-Vo 04707	(B)	2:53
14. Key To The World	C-2451-1-Vo 05004	(B)	2:47
15. Black Widow Stinger	C-2452-1-Vo 04694	(C)	2:40
16. Good Soppin'	C-2453-3-Vo 04694	(C)	2:27
17. Poor And Wandering Woman Blues	C-2456-1-Vo 05004	(C)	2:40
18. Bad Outside Friends	C-2457-1-Vo 04797	(C)	2:29
19. Worried Baby Blues	C-2454-1-Vo 04898	(D)	2:53
20. Call The Fire Wagon	C-2455-1-Vo 04858	(D)	2:24
21. Low Down Man Blues	C-2458-1-Vo 04797	(D)	2:47
22. Don't Lead My Baby Wrong	C-2459-1-Vo 04898	(D)	2:38
23. Keep Your Big Mouth Closed	C-2460-1-Vo 04858	(D)	2:50

## PERSONNEL:

- A: Memphis Minnie, vcl/gtr; Black Bob, pno; Charlie McCoy, mand;  
 prob. Ransom Knowing, sb (except on 1). \_\_\_\_\_ Chicago, 23 June 1938
- B: Little Son Joe (Ernest Lawlars), vcl/gtr; Memphis Minnie, gtr;  
 prob. Fred Williams, d. \_\_\_\_\_ Chicago, 3 February 1939
- C: Memphis Minnie, vcl/gtr; Little Son Joe, gtr; prob. Fred Williams, d. \_\_\_\_\_ Chicago, 3 February 1939
- D: Same as for C. \_\_\_\_\_ Chicago, 6 February 1939

NOTES: Good Soppin' take 3 comes from a test pressing; it is the same as take 1.  
 This is the fourth of 5 volumes. Minnie's 1929-1934 recordings are on Document DOCD-5028, 5029, 5030, 5031; her postwar-recordings 1944-1953 are on Wolf WBCD-008, 009, 010.

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Complete Recorded Works 1935-1941

In Chronological Order

VOLUME 4

(23 June 1938 to 6 February 1939)

COMPACT  
**disc**  
DIGITAL AUDIO

AUSTRO  
MECHANA

A A D

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Closed

**document**  
RECORDS

BDCD-6011